

Extemporaneous Comments on Personal Time

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A special dictation.

There are a few things I wish to speak about tonight which in part will be related to the talk of last night, but some of it is personal.

There is a problem growing out of the fact that I am personally 87 years old. Remember that Plato died at 80. I don't know how late he was productive. Immanuel Kant also at 80, and I understand in the last five years he wasn't able to produce. And it's said that Buddha either died or retired at 80. Now, the fact is the energy potential is limited, and how shall it be applied? There are things that I do that millions of people can do; there are some things that I'm doing that very few can do; and also some things that only I can do. My feeling is it should be concentrated upon the latter. The tendency for items to develop, physical and personal, that divert the attention into many directions is becoming too much of a load. I'm becoming irritable and even a tendency to be explosive. Therefore some provision will have to be made to reduce extraneous load so that I can concentrate my effort upon that which only I can do or only a few can do. Otherwise, there's no point in my staying on this plane. And there's been a tendency for details, *sangsaric* details, to grow, and it destroys productivity. You heard last night how much time Ramana spent in silence. With me productivity depends upon a lot of virtual silence. It's brooding. I don't call it meditation. I prefer the word brooding. You can brood even though you're maybe moving about. But the amount of brooding that may precede a production of only twenty minutes or half an hour may be very considerable. The effort in composition is fairly severe. I think it should be concentrated upon that. In any case, I see no point in staying on this plane except for such production. I think the meeting of people will have to be somewhat restricted. I may suggest a second general meeting for tapes. It's much easier to meet a group than to meet a single individual, except those who are well trained in their minds. Then it's easy to deal with them. But where they're not well trained and you feel that they need to read about three volumes before you can express one sentence that they'll understand, it's a labor; and I cannot afford that. I haven't the resources to meet it. That's simply it.

Now, I would suggest that we may use two periods a week—the Sunday meeting and one during the week; and then I'm not accessible to new people at other times, but at those times only. I understand very well now why Aurobindo met people only four times a year and didn't talk to them then, because it just simply drains down your resources and you have not those resources for the main work. And, I'm in a state right now of psychological fatigue, which is one in which effective production can't be done.

Now, that is enough for that. But I'm just speaking of a problem that will have to be worked out. I want to meet the people that have any serious need. I'm not particularly interested in having people bring books for me to read about somebody else, because I haven't the time to spread myself. I've got to concentrate upon the main issue.

Now, I want to say a word about Ramana. I liked the man very much from long ago. Perhaps in 1935, or thereabouts, maybe earlier, I learned of him through Brunton's book on *A Search in Secret India*.¹ I was impressed with the man, and I got interested in answering that very question, "Who are you?" And the answer came, and a most startling one, I am *Nirvana*, with the force of a propaedeutic Realization, or what Aurobindo calls mental Realizations; and that has become a building block in my philosophy leading to several clarifications.

Now, bear in mind my work, a central portion of it, is based upon five Realizations—three of them propaedeutic. That means they are not ultimate, not definitive. They are probably what Aurobindo means by a mental Realization. The element of ineffability is light in them. They can be formulated. Among them is the one that was expressed in that mandala. There were two Realizations that I call transcendental because they were definitive so far as I'm concerned. One of those I sought, and that is the only one of all that I sought; the others just happened. I was told, by one that I recognized as a sage, that I took incarnation in the West here, after having made breakthroughs before, under obscurity to become Westernized, and then to make the breakthrough without benefit of personal *guru* on this plane, though I was told there was a *guru* on an inner plane, which I believe. I have reason to believe, a very good reason. And that was sought. And I finally had found the key to the breakthrough; and I accepted the Kwan-Yin vow, which seemed to be a terrible thing when you think of turning your back on something so wonderful for unnumbered *kalpas*, and a *kalpa* is said to be 4,320,000,000 years. It's the message of the *Gita*, the final message of the *Gita*, and the Kwan-Yin vow.² But I was also told, watch out for a cycle of thirty-three. Now, in *The Voice of the Silence* it says that this renunciation is without compensation, but after thirty-three days magnificent compensation came, and it took all the sting out of that 4,320,000,000 years. So, it has been an happy outcome.

However, these Realizations are the basis of what I give, plus a continuing function which I call the transcendental function, which is available almost at any instant. I can invoke it or it can appear spontaneously. There are some people who can tell when it enters in without my saying a word, so it produces a certain psychical impact that is not a means of verbal communication to me. It is more like an energetic flow, whereas the outer man has the job of formulation. And the basis of formulation is all that I've ever picked up in this life. All scholarship has value as language, or as correlations with other features. And there are correlations with Buddhism and disagreements with Buddhism. There are correlations with Vedanta and disagreements with Vedanta. There are also correlations with the Greek current represented by Pythagoras, Plato, and the neo-Platonists. And there's where the mathematical element comes in—something which I have not so far found in Eastern yoga; and that is an authentically Western contribution.

I'd say that the key name for this feature is Pythagoras, for with Pythagoras number is the supreme building block of the universe. A statement which has, I think, a very profound truth in it. Therefore, there is a reason why my orientation is so strongly to

¹ Paul Brunton, *A Search in Secret India* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1934), 277-295.

² Wolff may have been referring to *The Voice of the Silence*.

the mathematical element and therefore diverges from that which is characteristic of what I have called the aesthetic yoga because in the aesthetic yoga there is an orientation to aesthetic aids. The arts, for instance, music and plastic art; drama, in the form of plays, but particularly in the form of ceremony, ritual, and rite; and in the general sense of the use of the sensuous organism. None of this is necessary in the yoga that I know. I do not at all reject aesthetic yoga. I accept it in principle as perfectly valid for the right man or the right people, but it is not the yoga that I know, not the one which I try to extend to others. Bear that clearly in mind. I am not a critic of it. Taking Northrop's statement as to the difference between the East and the West as at least valid up to a first degree of approximation, the Oriental orientation is to the aesthetic component and that fits; whereas, the Western orientation is to the theoretic component. But he speaks of that only in the sense of the determinate theoretic component, and does not speak of an indeterminate theoretic component or something of that sort which corresponds to the indeterminate aesthetic component. Adding that indeterminate factor may be regarded as the very thing upon which I am working.

Now, it is true that mathematics played a very large part in a subtle way, and I might bring up a certain point here: it is pure mathematics, not applied. Pure mathematics is a science of perfection, not of approximation. That is not true of applied mathematics. Now, the idea of very limited tolerances, such as one ten-thousandths of an inch, or in the case of optics, advanced phases of optics like critical telescopes, it may be a tolerance of only a few millionths of an inch. But tolerance is only approximation. The spirit of pure mathematics is perfection with no tolerance. Now, what I want to suggest here is that the step from the kind of thinking that involves approximation or tolerance to the kind of thinking that deals with a kind of absoluteness parallels the yogic leap. You may view the very difficulty that's involved in the yogic leap, the reason why you cannot march up in simple steps, that there is something that is well-nigh like an impossibility to overcome and you can't say how it is overcome. It may be by the intervention of the guru. But it is represented or at least symbolized by the very step from working approximations that belong to the empiric order to complete perfectionism, which is not simply doing something better and better, but doing it absolutely correctly without tolerance. Working for years with that spirit develops a certain quality in the mind that I found of the very highest value in the breakthrough itself, but it is also something that is not popular and very few can qualify for it.

Furthermore, I've had the rather rare experience of mathematical beauty. Even among those who may make a life-work in mathematics, they may never have experienced this. It is reported in the literature, and I've known it perhaps twice. It's only realized at a high level of concentration, but it's an extreme experience of beauty always involving the infinite, and comes the closer to the ultimate Realization itself of anything that I know. There is a delight with it, not as intense, but of somewhat the same quality of the ultimate Realization. However, the ultimate Realization did not involve this intension of concentration, which one can maintain only briefly. But to suggest the beauty, it is as though you have a super-cosmic view moving in elements all of which are infinite, and there emerges a sense of a profound harmony in it—not a heard harmony, but a harmony of proportions. And the beauty value is so extreme that all sensuous beauty, at least to me, by contrast seemed crude. I'll give an illustration of what is involved here in the very conception of the well-tempered clavier. To make music there has to be compromise, and

Bach did introduce a good piece of tempering as it's called, compromising. All sensuous art involves that. All sensuous activity involves that—compromise, tolerance. The mathematical spirit is completely intolerant of any approximation. I'm talking of pure mathematics. And that takes you over into another order of consciousness from anything that could be found in the empiric order, for everything in the empiric order involves approximation, and therefore crudities. And for that reason one whose had an extended experience of pure mathematics finds around him at all times crudity, even in what are called good works of art. Well, that very spirit of intolerance—this is not in the ethical sense—but intolerance in thought for mere approximation is, I found, a fundamental yogic aid. It is a kind of leap in consciousness out of the relative order. It's not easily accessible. This is an unusual preparation. Not many people have it, and not many people who go the mathematical way also, along with it, go the religious way. But with men like Pythagoras, Plato, and the neo-Platonists, mathematics was part and parcel of the religious way. And in a deep sense, I continue that spirit. I know there must be the ultimate adjustment to the needs of human limitation in all processes, but that is not my concern during such remaining years of production as I may have. It is to complete as far as possible the fundamental statement.

Now, while I do not need as much silence as Ramana did, I still need a lot of it. And that silence means reduction of *sangsaric* interference, because they act like gnats biting you. Incidentally, speaking about Ramana, for whom I felt rather strong affection, nonetheless, I prefer the way of Aurobindo; and he, too, was effective inwardly, but he was also effective outwardly. He produced a shelf of books. Of course he had the preparation and equipment for that and Ramana did not. But I feel a stronger rapport with the kind of effort Aurobindo put forth, a good deal. I go along with him in a great many things, but not in all things. I don't go along all the way with anybody whatsoever. Now, you may say that's presumptuous. Well, you're required to be yourself if you go this path, and if the transcendental function says contradict someone you revere, you've got to do it. You see, that which has gone before, in part, is speaking an eternal truth, a hidden truth. But that is not the spoken or written form. That's contained by the spoken or written form. The spoken and written form is for time and place and custom, and then it passes and other forms take its place. There is a time when a religious institution should cease to be, and others take their place. And if they're continued too long, they become a barrier, not an aid. We may become attached to them, but the time must be when they'll cease, and as the evolutionary process goes on, new forms continue. I fully expect that to happen to anything I put forth.

But I really am going to be for, or somewhat to be, withdrawals from new contacts and perhaps put them into special occasions when more than one could be in a group and the initiation of the contact could be by a tape. And I want to put forth what I have. I don't, now, want to be educated by a lot of people. I've had plenty of that and I've gotten a lot of wealth from it, but the time has come when I've got to center upon what is most essential. So I can't read all of the books that come my way. I can't make myself informed even though I want to on them without dissipating energy, which I can't afford to do. I'll ask your help to back me up in this. And that's all I want to say tonight.